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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LISBON 001976

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [ETRD](#) [MARR](#) [PO](#)  
SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE FM AMADO EXPLAINS STANCE ON KOSOVO,  
AFGHANISTAN, AND RUSSIA; ANNOUNCES SEPTEMBER KOSOVO  
RECOGNITION

Classified By: Ambassador Thomas F Stephenson, U.S. Embassy, Lisbon  
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

#### Summary

1. (C) In a cordial, one-on-one dinner with the Ambassador on August 7, FM Luis Amado confided that domestic political considerations and the Portuguese-Serbian relationship had delayed Portugal's recognition of Kosovo thus far. Nevertheless, he told the Ambassador that the GOP would recognize Kosovo sometime in the first week of September. Amado reiterated his earlier opposition to withdrawal of Portuguese commandos from Afghanistan, again laying primary blame on President Cavaco Silva, and expressed his support for recommitment of Special Forces to the theatre as soon as possible. He also expressed the GOP's backing for sanctions in Iran and voiced concerns regarding Russia's attempts to "encircle Europe" by using its control of energy supplies and transmission facilities. End Summary.

#### Kosovo

2. (C) During a candid one-on-one dinner that the Ambassador hosted at the Residence on August 7, FM Amado confided that Portugal was preparing to recognize Kosovo as an independent state the first week of September. Amado offered more details on Portugal's hesitancy than we had received before. He explained that the delay was a result of Portugal's relationship with Serbia and, to a lesser extent, an attempt to prevent internal political divisions. Portugal established itself as a neutral interlocutor with the Serbian government during its EU presidency last fall, and continues to maintain a relatively open stance towards Serbia among EU nations. Amado claimed Portugal's good bilateral relationship had left the GOP reluctant to join the ranks of nations estranged from Serbia over Kosovo recognition. Amado also confided that Serbian FM Jeremic personally had requested that Portugal hold off on recognizing Kosovo until September to allow Serbia to save face and avoid breaking diplomatic ties with Portugal over the issue. Since Serbia's government is in the process of reestablishing relations with European nations that had recognized Kosovo earlier this year, Portugal plans to move forward on recognition too. Amado told the Ambassador that his office is preparing the paperwork for Parliament's approval.

3. (C) Amado also mentioned that a second impediment to the GOP's recognition of Kosovo was a result of GOP concerns that Kosovo recognition would unite rightist and leftist parties against the ruling Socialist and Social Democratic governing parties. He said the GOP had believed that waiting would defuse the political storm and allow the Socrates

Administration to forge consensus on this issue.

AFRICOM

14. (C) Turning to the issue of establishing a base for AFRICOM in Europe, FM Amado stressed Portugal's interest in hosting AFRICOM and outlined Portugal's suitability for the role. In particular, Amado emphasized Portugal's "special relationship" with Africa and noted that Portugal had ability to serve as an honest broker with African nations without facing the tensions encountered by other former colonial powers.

Afghanistan

15. (C) Amado restated his personal opposition to Portugal's withdrawal of Portuguese commandos from Afghanistan and claimed that President Cavaco Silva had been the main proponent for drawing down the troops rotated out last week. Amado added that he was in favor of rotating Special Forces back into the theatre soon, which Cavaco Silva has left open as a future possibility. While the Ambassador noted that Portugal's two OMLT commitments were welcome, he stressed that the Special Forces would be helpful as well. The Ambassador told Amado that it was not helpful for an established and loyal supporter of the mission to leave at this point. Both agreed that NATO's credibility is at stake in the ISAF mission.

Iran Sanctions

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16. (C) Portugal shares U.S. concerns over Iran's weapons program and fully supports additional sanctions against Iran, according to Amado. While Amado made it clear that the GOP favored ongoing talks over additional sanctions, he conceded that the clock was running out for a non-military response to Iran's nuclear program. Amado also confirmed that Portugal's major petroleum company Galp had not established any deals with Iran and that his talks with major shareholder Americo Amorim had reassured him that Galp was not planning to move beyond discussions with Iran in the near term.

Russia

17. (C) When Amado raised the issue of Portugal's concern over U.S.-Russian tensions, the Ambassador responded that the U.S. was in continuing discussions with Russia to resolve our areas of disagreement. He admitted, however, that several important policy issues remain problematic in our relationship. Amado concurred with the Ambassador's expressed concerns about Russia attempting to "encircle Europe" by exerting control over energy supplies and transmission facilities. In response, Amado mentioned that Portugal was diversifying its energy supply to other nations, most recently Libya. Amado admitted, however, that Portugal was careful to avoid antagonizing Russia by pushing on areas of disagreement.

Lajes Utility

8.(C) The Ambassador told Amado that he was pleased to see that Portuguese officials were proposing future cooperation projects and seeking ways to keep its mission relevant. They both agreed that the proposed U.S. Congressional earmark to pay for the past wage gap at the base was a welcome solution to that issue.

Comment

19. (C) Amado offered us the most candid explanation for Portugal's reluctance over Kosovo provided to date. He was careful to stress that Portugal had not based its decision on Spain, as some speculated, but rather as a result of bilateral political considerations. His explanation makes sense, and is in keeping with Portugal's actions up to this point, but the GOP had been cagey about explaining its motivations up until now. Amado was just as forthcoming on his personal views regarding Special Forces in Afghanistan; however it is unlikely that he will lead a charge for their reinstatement. Amado made it clear that he would like to keep meeting every few months to build on our good relationship and suggested he host the Ambassador for lunch at the MFA in early October following the UNGA meetings in New York. End comment.  
Stephenson